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MOVEMENTS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Our friends in England continue their wonted activity. Some twenty dense pages of the October Herald are filled with reports of what they are doing in different parts of the country, but especially of lectures delivered in London and other large and important places, of petitions presented to Parliament, and able memorials on the affairs of Hayti, Tahiti and Morocco. We subjoin a single specimen of their manly and forcible remonstrances to their rulers against certain evils inseparable from the present war system. It is a petition to Parliament from 1240 inhabitants of Reading "against sending soldiers to foreign and colonial countries."

PETITION FROM READING.—"Respectfully sheweth, That your petitioners observe with deep concern, that the practice continues of sending soldiers from these kingdoms to various foreign and colonial stations.

"That a large proportion of the troops sent abroad consist of young men who have left their civil pursuits, through the oppressions on industry, and have entered the army, ignorant of the sufferings attendant on military life.

"That your petitioners are informed and believe, that during the last three years, or thereabout, there have perished in the British dependencies abroad, and in countries adjacent, upwards of twelve thousand soldiers, natives of the United Kingdom.

"That the annual mortality among one thousand European soldiers under thirty years of age, stationed in Jamaica, is upwards of *one hundred and forty*; and that in the various garrisons in India, China, and Bermuda, the deaths are fearfully numerous; so that comparatively few British soldiers from those settlements, ever return home.

"Your petitioners desire to express their conviction, that no government has a right to require of citizens services so dreadful, and attended with such awful sacrifice of human life.

"They therefore beseech the House of Commons, as the trustees of the people, not to sanction, by votes of money or otherwise, any further embarkation of troops from the United Kingdom to foreign or colonial countries."

SERIES OF PEACE CONVENTIONS.

We had space in our last number for only a passing glance at these Conventions held in Worcester, North Brookfield, Westfield and Springfield, Mass., and in Hartford, Conn. We now copy from *The Christian Citizen* a much fuller, yet still a very brief, synoptical report of only the two sessions in Worcester, which may, we presume, be regarded as a fair specimen of the rest, though the meetings were in several other places attended by much larger numbers.

The first of a series of Peace Conventions, to be holden in several towns in the county, commenced its sessions on the 11th inst. at Brinley Hall. Present, Samuel E. Coues, Esq. Pres. Am. Peace Society; J. P. Blanchard, Agent do.; Prof. Amasa Walker, of North Brookfield; Rev. Joshua Bates, D. D., Dudley; Rev. Mr. Peck, Grafton; all of whom took a part in the discussion.

The Convention was organized by the choice of Rev. Dr. Bates, as President, and J. P. Blanchard, and Elihu Burritt as Secretaries. The following resolution was presented by Mr. Coues:

Resolved, "That all war is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel."

This resolution Mr. Coues introduced and supported with a vigorous and glowing speech. He took and ably defended the ground, that war can never cease, while the Christian world admits it to be justified by the principles of

the gospel, in *extreme cases*. All the blood that has been shed since the Christian era, has been poured out like water in defensive wars. There never have been any *offensive* wars in Christendom. The crusades, and all the bloody campaigns of Napoleon, were *defensive* wars. All of them were *extreme cases*; and in war, extremes are exceedingly prone to meet. Between the attitudes of defence and aggression, there is no dividing line. If we may fight in defence of our own lives, we may and must fight in defence of the lives of others; if we may fight in defence of others, we may fight in defence of our property; if in defence of our property, then we may fight in defence of political rights; if in defence of rights, then we may fight in promotion of our interests; next, in promotion of our glory and our crimes. The gradations by which we reach this climax, are easy and inevitable.

Mr. Coues demonstrated, in a lucid manner, that the Christian religion could never subdue the world while divested of the full power of its pacific principles, and coerced into any connection with war.

Mr. Coues was followed in the discussion by Messrs. Blanchard and Peck in support of the resolution. The arguments they adduced, evinced that both were deeply read in the philosophy of the gospel. Rev. Mr. Peck, a new and eloquent advocate of the cause, developed, in a masterly manner, the *defensive* capacity of the principles of peace. The nation that adopted them was safe; the weapons of carnal warfare could not prevail against it. Those principles were the defences right from the arsenal of God; and the people who trusted alone in their strength, had Providence for their ally, their front and rearward. Christ knew well what he was saying, and what defences were necessary for a nation, when he said, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." That principle is worth a thousand Gibaltars. It never failed to disarm the enemy; it never will. It has always "heaped coals of fire on the head" of the assailant, not burning, but melting him down into a pacific disposition.

Dr. Bates, being under the necessity of leaving the chair, in order to return to his residence by the evening train of cars, arose and addressed the meeting in a short and felicitous speech, which was listened to with deep interest. In his younger days, he had been infected with the fascination of martial glory. He was not entirely divested of its influence, when he entered upon the Christian ministry. Officiating as chaplain, he rode around with the Colonel, and prayed eloquently to five thousand soldiers encamped in Dedham, about the time of the breaking out of the last war. When war was declared against Great Britain, he was settled as a pastor over a church. Feeling himself called to preach the gospel of peace, he prayed for peace between the two nations just entering the business of mutual slaughter. Next day, a member of his church entered his study, and with his voice trembling with angry emotion, declared if he prayed again for peace at that stage of the struggle, he would leave the meeting-house. During the war, he was presented by Gov. Strong with a commission of chaplaincy, and was urged to accept it; but, convinced that the religion of the Prince of peace could have no communion with the spirit of war, he sent back the commission to the Governor, with the reasons for declining it. From that time to the present, he has felt a growing interest in the cause of peace, and a stronger faith in its principles.

Mr. Walker next addressed the Convention in an animated and effective manner. He said if the principles of peace had not yet done many mighty works among Christian nations, it was because of their unbelief in their power. In the calm summer sunshine of international tranquillity, Christians were ready to repose great confidence in the peace principles; but as soon as the heavens darkened with portentous clouds, and the muttering rumors of war struck upon their ears, and danger was nigh, why, then they begin simultaneously, like Peter, to doubt and sink in despondency. Then, like the unbelieving Jews, they are in trembling haste to fly from the protecting arms of God into the puny arms of the mailed Egyptians. If the enemy

should come down upon us, say they, what should we do? If they should come with fire and sword, to burn and slay, what should we do? Do! said Mr. W., why, trust implicitly to the great immortal strength of the principles of peace. These are equal to any emergency or enemy. They are a sovereign remedy and resort in "extreme cases." They carried William Penn through as extreme a case as any Christian nation can fear to get into. Armed with these divine principles, trusting to no Egyptian reeds of steel, no mailed arm of flesh, he came among the red savages, whose bare breasts had been scarred in their long and bloody wars with the Puritans of New England, the Christians of New York, and the pale-faced *Long Knives* of Virginia. The memory of burnt wigwams, and the cry of their children as they were thrust into the flames on the bayonets of Christians, were fresh in their hearts. Among their painted chieftains, strode many a Logan, sombre, stern, with long-brooding revenge rankling in his bosom. He came among them from the land of their deadliest foes; he spoke their language, and his face was pale like theirs. But he came with peace in his eye, and peace on his lips. He took hold of their rough, red hands, and called them brethren; and their strong hearts grew soft at his words. And there they sat down, and held sweet counsel together. There they burnished the silver chain of friendship bright, for the music of the good man's voice was peace. And their old men called him father, and their children, and their children's children called him Onas. No oaths were used in that covenant of peace, and none were broken.

Evening Session.—The Convention met, according to adjournment, at half past six, P. M. Charles White, Esq. of Worcester, was chosen to preside.

Rev. Mr. Foster of Boston opened the discussion with an animated and interesting speech, in which he gave the sentiments of some of the most distinguished men of the country with regard to the principles and progress of peace. He had travelled extensively in different parts of the Union, with the express object of presenting the subject of peace to the public mind. In carrying out this object, he had waited upon some of the foremost men of the nation, and found them cordially disposed to favor and promote the cause of international peace. While at Washington, he conversed freely upon the subject with most of the Northern and Southern senators, and other members of Congress, from various parts of the Union. Mr. Adams said that he was a believer in a coming age of peace, and that it was close at hand. He desired to place his name and testimony in favor of permanent and mutual peace, to be seen by his descendants. The cause, he said, claims the prayers and efforts of all the friends of the human race.

The proposition of a Congress of Nations, to settle amicably every international question of controversy that might arise, met with a hearty response from almost every member of Congress with whom he had conversed. They all seemed to appreciate the everlasting honor and glory, and gratitude which the present and future generations of the race would award to our government, if it would do what it can easily do and speedily do—prevent another war from ever taking place in Christendom. They unanimously conceded that a proposition coming from the United States to the Christian nations of the world, to adopt some substitute for war, which should forever relieve them from the crushing burden of martial preparations, would be received and accepted most cordially by the European powers. If such a Congress of nations shall ever be effected, America will have to move first. She must assume the dignity of her destiny, and become the grand pacificator of the world; and then God will bless her, and all the successive generations of mankind will rise up and call her blessed.

Mr. Coues succeeded Mr. Foster, in his usual fervid and felicitous manner. He remarked that the gospel contained the true conservative principle, the prohibition of all wars; that if the church had retained, as a part of the teachings of the Saviour, the absolute and unconditional command to love the enemy, so far as the religion spread, so far it would have carried with it

perfect peace. Presented thus in its purity, it would have spread more rapidly and extensively over the earth, and folded the nations in the arms of peace. The time has come when this truth—the prohibition of all wars by Christianity—is about to be acknowledged. It is by the diffusion of this principle among professed Christians, that public opinion is to be arrayed against the practice of international war.

Mr. Coues, in the course of his remarks, gave several illustrations of the peace principle, in warding off the attacks of enemies, and in the preservation of the life. He insisted that the very injunction of our Saviour, to “overcome evil with good,” was a proof of its power; that good can conquer the evil doer; that it has been eminently successful wherever it has been fully tried; not successful merely in the relations of Christians to Christians, but also in those of Christians to the barbarous, uncivilized Indians.

We cannot fully report the remarks of Mr. Coues, but only speak of the few points which impressed themselves upon our memory.

Mr. Coues was followed by Mr. Blanchard, a long tried and active friend of peace. He spoke of the importance of the dissemination of the principles of peace. He detailed, at some length, the various arguments which had convinced his own mind of the truth of the resolution on the table, “*that all war is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel*,” and which had induced him to devote himself to the great work of disseminating the pacific sentiment among Christians. The devotion he exhibited to the cause, his well known character, deeply imbued with Christian love, rendered his remarks deeply interesting to the Convention.

Rev. Mr. Peck, of Grafton, spoke of the feeling of security which every one enjoyed who planted himself upon the pacific principles of the gospel. In the midst of revolutions, wars, and rumors of wars, he could lie down and sleep sweetly, while those who threw themselves upon the arm of brute force, were quaking with fear and painful watchings. He adverted to his own experience during the difficulties in Rhode Island. When the maddened parties were apparently on the point of shedding each other's blood, he had passed the evening with several Christian friends, in discussing the defensive power of the peace principles. In such a crisis, he found himself almost alone in his faith in those principles. The emergency was an extreme case, and an exception in favor of physical force was deemed justifiable. He was that night a guest with a friend who adhered to this opinion. Rumors of attacks were circulating through the city; but he retired to rest, and his slumbers were calm and unbroken; while his host was up and down all night, grasping his gun and rushing to the door at the report of every musket that was discharged far or near.

Rev. Mr. Allen, of Northboro', followed with a few interesting remarks, embracing facts relating to the early history of the cause.

Amasa Walker, of North Brookfield, in an animated speech, gave a history of the peace movements in the Old World. A new era is dawning upon humanity. The political world is beginning to recognise the immense capacity of the peace principle, not only as the strongest element of defence, but of revolution. The strong-hearted reformers of England and Ireland, aiming at reformatations that must upturn the old, iron-hearted, deep-seated institutions of the British government, have based all their hopes and efforts upon moral suasion and pacific agitation. Their principles are the principles of peace; their leaders are the greatest peace-makers of the age. First among the moral elevators of mankind, stands O'Connell, the man of gigantic faith in God and humanity, and the revolutionary principles of peace. There he stands, sublime in the moral sublimity of his position, uplifted, *toto cælo*, above all the Alexanders and Cæsars of the world—saying to the past and future generations of men—saying to all the mighty martyrs and heroes of patriotism, to Wallace and Washington, and all the renowned champions of human liberty—saying to all Christendom, and to all Christianity, and to all Christian men and ministers—saying to the aggrieved, abused, hot-blooded

millions of his countrymen: "*Remember, no political change is worth a single crime, nor, above all, a single drop of human blood!*"

Rev. Alonzo Hill, of Worcester, closed the discussion with a few earnest and eloquent remarks in approbation of the cause, and of the objects and spirit of the Peace Conventions, the first of which had been holden in Worcester. We regret that we have not room, this week, for the beautiful, peace-breathing sentiments he uttered. They were, indeed, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver," cheering to the hopes of those friends of the cause who had volunteered, at their own expense, to present its claims to the Christian public in a series of Conventions. Although the attendance was thin during the sessions of the Convention in Worcester, still we are firmly persuaded that it ought not to be ascribed to any special apathy or indifference in our citizens with regard to the subject.

ABOLITION OF MILITIA DRILLS IN VERMONT—PROGRESS OF PEACE THERE.—

As it is cheering to those who are laboring for the advancement of a good cause, to be informed of such facts as mark its progress, I would say through the Advocate to the friends of peace, that the Legislature of Vermont, at its last session, abolished militia trainings, requiring only the uniformed companies to meet at all. The military system is here fast falling into disrepute; its former supporters and admirers have but little taste for its idle and pernicious display, but rather witness its gradual reduction with pleasure.

There are many other indications of progress in Vermont. The subject of peace is investigated and discussed in most places to which men resort. War is fast becoming abhorrent to the feelings of Christians—ecclesiastical bodies are passing strong resolves in favor of peace, and commending it to the prayers and patronage of the good. Many of the presses actively and faithfully diffuse the sentiments of the Peace Society. Such is the fact with the religious journals; and I trust that the time is not far distant, when the political press will promptly espouse this noble cause, and present weekly the subject of peace on the same page with the discussion of ordinary topics.

I have adverted to a few of the numerous proofs of an altered tone on this subject in Vermont, of an increasing distaste for the cruel, barbarous, indefensible custom of war. While there are some indications full of encouragement, much needs to be done for the furtherance of the cause. It is very desirable that the Advocate, or some other good periodical, leavened with the true principles and spirit, should be circulated here.



RYLAND FLETCHER.

Proctorsville, Vt., Dec. 28, 1844.

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